

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (original) An anoscope for hemorrhoidal surgery, comprising:

a hollow body defining a longitudinal channel, said hollow body being closed at a distal end and at least partially open at a proximal end, said hollow body having a sidewall provided with a window spaced from said distal end; and

a shutter member movably mounted to said hollow body to cover said window during a positioning of the anoscope in an anal canal, said shutter member being removable from said window to permit hemorrhoidal tissues to protrude through said window into said channel, said window having a size suitable for the admission of hemorrhoidal tissues into said channel.

2. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 1 wherein said hollow body has a longitudinal axis, said sidewall being formed with a bulging portion located on one side of said axis and extending from said proximal end partially along a length of said sidewall towards said distal end, said window being located in said bulging portion, said shutter member being slidable along and in engagement with said bulging portion.

3. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 2 wherein said shutter member is slidably mounted to said hollow body.

4. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 3 wherein said shutter member is disposed in said hollow body.

5. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 4 wherein said shutter member has a shape conforming to said sidewall in a region thereof about said window.

6. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 5 wherein said hollow body has a rim surrounding an opening at said proximal end, said sidewall being provided along said rim with a cutout disposed on a side of said axis opposite said bulging portion.

7. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 1 wherein said shutter member is disposed in said hollow body.

8. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 1 wherein said shutter member has a shape conforming to said sidewall in a region thereof about said window.

9. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 1 wherein said hollow body has a rim surrounding an opening at said proximal end, said sidewall being provided along said rim with a cutout disposed on a side of said hollow body opposite said bulging portion.

10. (original) The anoscope defined in claim 1 wherein said window is spaced from said proximal end.

11. (currently amended) A surgical instrument, comprising:
an instrument shaft;
a handle connected to said shaft at a proximal end thereof;

a pair of jaws mounted to said shaft at a distal end thereof, said handle being operatively connected to said jaws for alternatively opening and closing same, at least one of said jaws taking the form of a C- or U-shaped clamping member movable alternately away and towards the other one of said jaws; and

a ~~hemorrhoid~~ tissue occlusion component mounted to said jaws for acting on tissues gripped between said jaws, to couple said tissues to each other.

12. (original) The instrument defined in claim 11 wherein said jaws are mounted to said shaft so as to remain parallel to one another during opening and closing strokes of said jaws.

13. (original) The instrument defined in claim 12 wherein a distal one of said jaws is mounted to at least two parallel rods each connected at one end to said shaft.

14. (original) The instrument defined in claim 13 wherein said jaws extend in planes oriented substantially perpendicularly to said rods.

15. (original) The instrument defined in claim 14 wherein a given one of said jaws is slidably coupled to said rods, the other of said jaws being fixed with respect to said rods.

16. (original) The instrument defined in claim 15 wherein said rods are coupled to opposite sides of each one of said jaws.

17. (currently amended) The instrument defined in claim 11 wherein said ~~hemorrhoid~~ tissue occlusion component is taken from the group consisting of a stapling mechanism, an injection mechanism connectable to a reservoir of a sclerosing composition, and optical fibers connectable to a source of laser radiation.

18. (original) The instrument defined in claim 11 wherein each of said jaws takes the form of a C- or U-shaped clamping member movable alternately away and towards the other one of said jaws.

19. (original) The instrument defined in claim 11 wherein said one of said jaws is a proximal one of said jaws and defines a gap, a distal end portion of said shaft being U- or C-shaped in cross-section and defining a recess communicating with said gap, thereby facilitating visualization of a surgical site.

20. (original) A method for the treatment of hemorrhoids, comprising:
providing an anoscope and a hemorrhoid occlusion device, said anoscope including a hollow body having a sidewall provided with a window, said hemorrhoid occlusion device having a distal end provided with a pair of jaws, at least a distal one of said jaws including a C- or U-shaped clamping member;
inserting said anoscope into an anal canal;
manipulating said anoscope so that hemorrhoidal tissues protrude through said window into said anoscope;

inserting said jaws of said occlusion device into said anoscope;

after the protruding of said hemorrhoidal tissues through said window and after the inserting of said jaws into said anoscope, manipulating said occlusion device so that said jaws are located on opposite sides of the hemorrhoidal tissues;

thereafter closing said jaws to clamp the hemorrhoidal tissues; and

subsequently operating a tissue occlusion component of said occlusion device to permanently constrict a portion of said hemorrhoidal tissues.

21. (original) The method defined in claim 20 wherein the manipulating of said anoscope including turning said anoscope about a longitudinal axis so that said hemorrhoidal tissues are aligned with said window.

22. (original) The method defined in claim 21 wherein the turning of said anoscope is carried out after the inserting of said anoscope into the anal canal.

23. (original) The method defined in claim 20 wherein the jaws of said occlusion device are inserted into said anoscope after the inserting of said anoscope into the anal canal.

24. (original) The method defined in claim 23 wherein the jaws of said occlusion device are inserted into said anoscope after the protruding of the hemorrhoidal tissues through said window.

25. (original) The method defined in claim 20 wherein said anoscope includes a shutter member for covering said window, wherein the inserting of said anoscope into the anal canal includes inserting said anoscope with said shutter member covering said window, further comprising moving said shutter member to uncover said window to permit said hemorrhoidal tissues to protrude through said window.

26. (original) The method defined in claim 25 wherein the moving of said shutter member including sliding said shutter member relative to said anoscope.

27. (original) The method defined in claim 26 wherein said anoscope has a longitudinal axis, said sidewall being formed with a bulging portion located on one side of said axis and extending from a proximal end of said anoscope partially along a length of said sidewall towards a distal end of said anoscope, said window being located in said bulging portion, said shutter member being slid along and in engagement with said bulging portion.

28. (original) The method defined in claim 20, further comprising maintaining said jaws in parallel to one another during the closing of said jaws.

29. (original) The method defined in claim 20 wherein the operating of said tissue occlusion component includes an action taken from the group consisting of stapling the hemorrhoidal tissues, injecting the hemorrhoidal tissues with a sclerosing composition, and irradiating the hemorrhoidal tissues with laser radiation.

30. (original) A surgical instrument assembly for the treatment of hemorrhoids, comprising an anoscope and a hemorrhoid occlusion device,

said anoscope including a hollow body defining a longitudinal channel, said hollow body being closed at a distal end and at least partially open at a proximal end, said hollow body having a sidewall provided with a window spaced from at least said distal end,

said hemorrhoid occlusion device including an instrument shaft provided at a distal end with two jaws, at least one of said jaws including a C- or U-shaped clamping member movable alternately away and towards the other of said jaws for clamping and occluding hemorrhoidal tissues protruding through said window into said anoscope, said jaws being insertable into said anoscope so that said jaws are located on opposite side of hemorrhoidal tissues protruding through said window into said anoscope.

31. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said jaws are mounted to a pair of parallel rods each connected at one end to said shaft.

32. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 31 wherein said jaws extend in planes oriented substantially perpendicularly to said rods.

33. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 31 wherein a given one of said jaws is slidably coupled to said rods, the other of said jaws being fixed with respect to said rods.

34. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 31 wherein said rods are coupled to opposite sides of each of said jaws.

35. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said hemorrhoid occlusion device further includes a hemorrhoid occlusion component mounted to said jaws for acting on tissues gripped between said jaws, to couple said tissues to each other.

36. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 35 wherein said hemorrhoid occlusion component is taken from the group consisting of a stapling mechanism, an injection mechanism connectable to a reservoir of a sclerosing composition, and radiation guide elements connectable to a source of electromagnetic radiation.

37. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 36 wherein said occlusion component is a stapling mechanism including a staple cartridge removably mounted to one of said jaws.

38. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said anoscope further includes a shutter member mounted to said hollow body to cover said window during a positioning of the anoscope in an anal canal, said shutter member being

movable relative to said hollow body to uncover said window to permit hemorrhoidal tissues to protrude through said window into said channel.

39. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said hollow body has a longitudinal axis, said sidewall being formed with a bulging portion located on one side of said axis and extending from said proximal end partially along a length of said sidewall towards said distal end, said window being located in said bulging portion.

40. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said jaws are mounted to said shaft so as to remain parallel to one another during opening and closing strokes of said jaws.

41. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said one of said jaws is located proximally of said other of said jaws.

42. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said jaws are parts of a cartridge removably attachable to said shaft.

43. (original) The surgical instrument assembly defined in claim 30 wherein said occlusion device includes a removable cartridge member incorporated in at least one of said jaws.

44. (new) A surgical method comprising:

providing (a) a hollow member having a peripheral wall provided with a window and (b) a closure member slidably connectable to said hollow member for alternately covering and uncovering said window;

inserting, into a patient, said hollow member and said closure member, said closure member covering said window during the inserting of said hollow member and said closure member;

after the inserting of said hollow member and said closure member into the patient, shifting said cover member relative to said hollow member, thereby allowing tissues of the patient to protrude into said hollow member via said window;

after the protruding of said tissues, clamping a portion of the protruding tissues between a pair of jaws;

after the clamping of said portion of the protruding tissues, actuating a tissue occlusion device in said jaws to effectuate a coupling of said protruding tissues;

after the actuating of said tissue occlusion device, opening said jaws to release said tissues;

after the opening of said jaws, withdrawing said hollow member and said closure member from the patient, said tissues passing back through said window during the withdrawing of said hollow member and said closure member from the patient.